Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1607 - May 30, 2008

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1607 with a release date of Friday, May 30th, 2008 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T.

Russia launches its RS-30 ham radio satellite. The FCC says it will soon clarify what a repeater really is, no new subbands on 2 meters for digital voice operations, a quick look at what was new at Dayton and the Anchorage Hamfest says to "come on up!!" Find out more on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1607 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: RUSSIA LAUNCHES RS-30

Ham radio has a new bird in the sky. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the details:

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Russia has successfully orbited a new ham radio satellite called Yubileiny. Also designated as RS-30 the bird's CW beacon is operational on 435.315 MHz with reports of other signals also on 435.215 MHz as well.

At the time of writing it is still not clear if RS-30 is carrying a linear or FM transponder. It does appear to be in a 1500 km orbit which would give a pass time of up to 20 minutes and enable stations over 7000 km away to be worked.

Work on the satellite started in December 2004 with the intention of launching it in 2007 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first satellite Sputnik-1.

We will have more ham radio space related news later on in this weeks Amateur Radio Newsline report.

From the studio in Los Angeles, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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A full report on the satellite with pictures can be seen at www.npopm.com/?cid$2
(ANS)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAMS SUPPORT CHINA EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

Ham radio post quake rescue operations are continuing in China. Jim Linton, VK3PC, of the WIA News is in Forrest Hill, Australia, with the

latest update:

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Situation report on China earthquake

The Chinese Radio Sports Association is quietly very pleased that radio amateurs in its country have been a key part of the rapid government-led response to the big Sichuan earthquake.

The death toll climbs daily with many thousands still missing and five million left homeless following the 12th of May quake. The extensive disaster recovery work that includes disease prevention measures, providing food and shelter will continue for some considerable time yet.

What is now emerging are more details of how radio amateurs swung into immediate action to provide emergency communications.

Clearly, when the IARU national radio society CRSA asked in the early days for three designated HF frequencies to be kept clear, those frequencies were being used for urgent traffic.

Fan Bin, BA1RB, on behalf of CRSA, said the society expresses sincere thanks for the cooperation around the world to free up those frequencies, and acknowledges having received inquiries and ï¿½warm concerns' of
 amateur
radio societies worldwide.
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As the disaster response begins to lessen in intensity, government officials and the news media such as the China Central Television have given recognition that amateur radio amateurs stepped in to provide vital links.

The TV service in a news report said that when all other communication means failed, amateur radio operators came out to provide valuable first hand information from the centre of the earthquake disaster.

This included an HF link for the Red Cross from the disaster area back to the nation's capital city of Beijing, enabling that aid agency to do its essential humanitarian work.

In other action, Luo BY8AA continuously coordinated VHF/UHF communications for a 100 km radius from Chengdu, the capital of southwest China's province of Sichuan.

More repeaters were set up in two other cities that are among the worst hit areas outside the epicentre, to form an effective amateur radio communication network.

In another report two ham radio operators drove to the centre of the earthquake area and had a repeater set up by the morning of 13 May just hours after the disaster hit.

Their repeater enabled the transmission of rescue instructions, status reports and was a main communication channel for public use when telephone services were down.

Among the traffic that repeater carried were communications for the Mayor of a city, who gave his orders to those on the front line rescue and recovery activity, and to receive up to date situation reports.

A fuller story on the role amateur radio played in China's worst earthquake disaster in 58 years is expected later this month but there's no doubt the individuals involved did their very best under extreme conditions that included hundreds of after-shocks.

Now closing this report with an acknowledgement of information provided by Fan Bin BA1RB, this is Jim Linton VK3PC, Chairman of the IARU Region 3 Disaster Communications Committee, for the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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Meantime the Southgate news reports that radio amateurs in Hong Kong have been sending much needed supplies to assist victims of the Sichaun, China earthquake that occurred almost three weeks ago. The Chinese Radio Sports Association website said that on May 18th members of the Hong Kong Amateur Radio Communications Association - VR2HAM - donated a second batch of food, medicine, communications equipment and other materials to the ongoing disaster relief efforts. (VK3PC, WIA News, Southgate News)

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RADIO LAW: IS IT A REPEATER OR IS A DUCK A DUCK

Back in the United States, the FCC says it will soon answer the question of when is a repeater and when might it be is it something else? That's what the Northern California Packet Association wants to know and it has filed a request for clarification that asks the FCC define what it means by the term simultaneously as it is used when defining what a repeater is.   According to the FCC's Bill Cross, speaking at the recent Dayton Hamvention FCC forum, this question is the result of some folks who claim D-Star repeaters are not repeaters by virtue of their inherent analog to digital and digital to analog lime lag:

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Cross: "The Northern California Packet Association has filed a request for clarification that the FCC define what is meant by the term simultaneously as it is used when defining a repeater.

"The issue here is that in California, D-STAR repeaters have been coordinated on channels that are set aside for auxiliary stations, on the basis that, because there is a delay in retransmission of the signal, the retransmission is not simultaneous, and therefore the repeating station is not a repeater.

"Others have advanced what he calls "the duck argument: If the station looks like a repeater, if it functions like a repeater, and it sounds like a repeater, it should be treated as a repeater -- and confined to the repeater subbands.

"A decision on this will be coming shortly."

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The applicable rule that Bill Cross seems to be referring to is section 97.3, subpart 36. It defines a repeater as an amateur station that instantaneously retransmits on a different channel the angle-modulated phone or image emission transmission of another amateur station.

But this rule was written before the advent of digital audio systems that by their very nature have some inherent delay. Whether or not the FCC will strictly adhere to this definition or modify it to meet current technology could well determine the future of digital audio repeaters. Bill Cross says that a decision on this issue will be coming from the Commission in the not to distant future. (ARNewsline)

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BREAK 1

From down-under in New Zealand and the West coast of the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Indianapolis Hamfest Association repeater serving Indianapolis, Indiana

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO LAW: DON'T ASK THE FCC TO RE-REGULATE HAM RADIO

If there was one lesson that came out of the FCC Forum at the recent Dayton Hamvention it is not ask the FCC to re-regulate any aspect of the service because its just not going to happen. Case in point, the recently denied petition filed with the agency by Mark Miller, N5RFX. The FCC's Bill Cross says that the rules now in place are more than adequate to minimize interference from digital operations to other existing modes:

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Cross: "The request that we limit the subbands for automatically controlled digital stations are permitted to transmit on to only those specified in (Part) 97 is curious because the rules as they are today limit transmissions from these stations to a bandwidth of no more than 500 cycles or Hz. on frequencies authorized for RTTY and data emissions outside of the automatically control subbands, when a locally or remote controlled station is interrogating that automatic station. If the idea behind this request was to limit these stations to the subbands to minimize interference, we were not persuaded that limiting stations that were transmitting in response to interrogation by a station where there was a control operator present would cause increased interference because these stations are already limited to a 500 Hz. bandwidth."

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In other words, the technology of tomorrow is about here and its up to all

of us in the ham community to learn how to introduce it and how use it without the help of the FCC. (ARNewsline(tm))

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RADIO LAW: NO NEW SUBBANDS FOR DIGITAL VOICE

At the same time, the FCC made it clear that its not going to make specific spectrum available for digital voice relay operations. This after the agency recently turned away a petition from two California hams who wanted the creation of an additional 300 kHz wide subband for D-Star and other digital voice operations on the two meter band. Again Bill Cross, W3TN:

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Cross: "The third item that came out had to do with 2 meters. We received a request from two hams out in California. What they wanted was for us to (allow) a little more spectrum -- 300 KHz -- to be authorized for repeater stations. Currently, repeater can use 3 of the 4 Mhz in the 2 meter band. They claim that additional spectrum is needed for repeater stations because some amateur repeater stations have begun (using) certain digital communications protocols and digital voice operations that are incompatible with the existing analog operations because digital voice users are unable to determine if the desired frequency is in use by An analog station. Inadvertently, they say, digital systems can cause harmful interference to analog systems. They also claim that coordinating groups have been unable to separate analog and digital voice repeater operations because the available repeater spectrum on the 2 meter band is fully occupied by existing analog systems.

Now, as I mentioned, repeaters are prohibited from using two 500 Khz segments of the 2 meter band in order to minimize harmful interference to other amateur service stations. Believe it or not, some licensed users use 2 meters for things other than repeater operation. The petition was turned down because their request would likely result in increased interference to other operations such as Packet, moonbounce, and simplex type operations. .

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So how do you make room for digital voice repeaters where no channel pairs are available? Cross says that's up to the ham community and the nations frequency coordinators to work out and not the job of the FCC.

Cross also came down on those hams who hold a coordination but have no system on the air. He stopped short of directing that coordinators act to free up channels where a coordination exists but their is no repeater using it. None the less his message to the coordination community and to those who have repeaters only on paper came through loud and clear.
 (ARNewsline(tm))

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RADIO LAW: UN-NEEDED PETITION LAUNCHED OVER INDUSTRY CANADA MISTAKE

A strange story out of Canada where mis-information on the part of one of

that nations telecommunications regulators lead to an un-needed petition from the ham radio community. One asking that nations political leaders to force Industry Canada to resume regulating the nations ham radio operators, even though it had never stopped doing so. Here's what happened.

Back in early May, Eddie Pereira, VA3EDP, sent a letter to Industry Canada regarding interference complaints in the Canadian amateur radio service. The reply he received on May 13th from the Spectrum Management department in Toronto likely caught him off guard. It read, and we quote:

"The Amateur Band is self policing now because it has been de-licensed for the past few years. Industry Canada is no longer the regulatory body overseeing the Amateur Band operation."

This response did not sit well with VA3EDP, and he decided to do something about it. His action came in the form of that on-line petition to Canadian Parliamentary leaders that urged them to force Industry Canada to resume regulating the Canadian amateur radio service. The petition garnered close to 300 signatures in its short life. Some from real heavyweights in Canadian ham radio politics.

Well, you guessed it. The Industry Canada bureaucrat who had responded to Pereira's original information request was totally wrong. Industry Canada had not abandoned the nations hams and has no plans to do so. But it took intervention from Radio Amateurs of Canada to straighten it all out.

On May 20th Radio Amateurs of Canada contacted Industry Canada which confirmed that the information sent to VA3EDP was incorrect. In fact, the agency affirmed it is the regulatory authority for Amateur Radio in Canada.

VA3EDP has since received a message from the acting Director of Industry Canada's Toronto office confirming that the original unsigned e-mail was sent in error. He says that he will be meeting an official of the Industry Canada in the near future to discuss a spectrum management issue that was the cause of his initial inquiry with. (RAC, others)

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RESCUE RADIO: GAREC 2008 TO BE HELD IN GERMANY IN JUNE

The fourth Global Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Conference, GAREC-2008, will take place on June 26th and 27th in Germany. This, in concert with the German HamRadio 2008 convention that begins on the 27th of June at the Conference Center of the Friedrichshafen.

GAREC-2008 will focus on the co-operation among IARU member societies and with specialized groups working on emergency communications in the Amateur Radio Service. The event is being organized by the IARU Region 1 Emergency Coordinator, Seppo Sisatto, OH1VR. Working with him ias the same team that has already put on the highly successful GAREC Conferences in Tampere, Finland, in 2005 and 2006. (Southgate)

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RESCUE RADIO: DELAWARE ARES GROUP RESPONDS TO MAJOR STORM

Back in the USA, Sussex County Delaware ARES sprang into action on Monday May 12th, This as a major late season storm strained resources in the states coastal region.

As wind gusts were clocked in excess of 60 mph and inches of driving rain blanketed the area, Sussex County ARES activated its' Emergency Radio Network.

Beginning at 09:50 hours the group began providing eyewitness reports of weather, flood and traffic conditions throughout the county. Some 32 members worked for hours reporting power outages and road closures due to flooding and debris. (eHam)

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ON THE AIR: USPS AND ARRL SPECIAL EVENT

To help kick off the 2008 North American Safe Boating Campaign, the United States Power Squadrons will hold a special event June 7 and 8 at the Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station. That's W1AW at American Radio Relay League headquarters in Newington, June Connecticut.

The United States Power Squadrons and the ARRL have been working together for the past several years on these campaigns. The ARRL shares in the Power Squadrons' commitment to education, safety and public service. It has been promoting boating and marine electronic education and seminars.

The W1AW special event station will broadcast from 1200 to 2400 GMT on frequencies 3.99, 7.29, 14.29 and 21.39 MHz for single side band phone. The station will also use digital modes PSK31 and RTTY. (USPS - ARC)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. This week from beneath the Southern Cross in Wellington, New Zealand and from the United States of America, we are the Amateur Radio Newsline, with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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DAYTON WRAP-UP: THE LITTLE BIT OF NEW GEAR

If those attending the recent Dayton Hamvention were hoping that a bunch of new gear would be introduced this year, they would have been very disappointed. Burt Hicks, WB6MQV, in the newsroom with more:

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While 2007 had a load of new product introductions, 2008 can best be described as a year of tweaking and improving what was shown 12 months ago. That's not to say that there were no new products -- just not very many

and
nothing really upscale. And unfortunately, nothing that could be classified as earth shattering.

On the high frequency transceiver front Icom did show its soon to be available IC-7200. This unit is being billed as a robustly built transceiver providing coverage of H-F amateur bands plus 6 meters and housed in a box that should be of interest to those who are involved in on-the-go emergency communications.

While Icom does not say that the IC-7200 is waterproof, it notes that extra design steps have been applied to the front panel buttons and knobs. This provides a measure of protection against water intrusion.

Power out is the customary 100 watts. Features include D-P filtering, digital twin pass band tuning, manual notch filter, keypad entry, dual VFOs, voice synthesizer, 200 memories, attenuator, RIT, scanning, 1 Hz tuning and even a USB port on the rear panel. Taken together these features are perfect for those first responders needing the ability to do electronic messagingvia an HF network from a USB connected laptop.

For the crowd on 6 meters and above, the only new item was a quad-band H-T from the folks at Vertex Standard. The latest in its Yaesu brand V-X line, the new VX-8 can transmit and receive in the 50 to 54, 144 to 148, 222 to 225 and 440 to 450 MHz bands. Its submersible design makes it practically an air tight unit that includes a built-in dual speed packet modem with APRS support along with Bluetooth and GPS options. Included are all the other bells and whistles that the very popular V-X line has become famous for.

And from a major supplier hardware standpoint, that was it.

If there were any big losers it was those who are waiting for a second source for D-Star transceivers and HTs -- in the hope that would bring competition and possibly drive prices down.

But no other company showed up at this year's Dayton with a D-Star compatible radio. And so far, it doesn't seem that there is any interest on
the part of any of any other company to enter the D-Star field.

So for now it seems that only Icom plans to support D-Star in North America. Because of this, one could assume that prices will likely remain unchanged or even go up. And if that happens it will not be Icom's fault either. With the weakening US dollar vs. the strengthening Japan Yen, the actual cost for electronic goods made in the western half of the Pacific Rim may very likely see a significant price hike in the months to come -- as will much of everything else made outside of the U.S.A.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Burt Hicks, WB6MQV, at the studio in Los Angeles.

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Oh yes, if you want to get a good visual idea of what this years Dayton Hamvention was like may we recommend that you view two free videos. Both

were produced by our friend Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB, and are up on the YouTube dot com website. One is titled All Night Long and the other Joe calls Lean on Me. Just search on YouTube Hamvention 2008 and K0NEB to find them. (ARNewsline(tm))

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: HALL OF SCIENCE HAMFEST IN NYC JUNE 8

The Hall of Science Amateur Radio Club Hamfest will be hold June 8th in the New York Hall of Science parking lot. That's in Flushing Meadow Corona Park in Queens, New York. Admission is by donation. Vendor set-up begins at 7:30 a,m. with the doors opening to the public 9 a.m. local Ewastern time. Amenities include ample free parking,, QSL card checking and more. Talk-in is on the 145.270 MHz repeater and requires a 136.5 sub-audible access tone. For more information e-mail Stephen Greenbaum to wb2kdg@arr1.net or visit www.hosarc.org on the world wide web. (Via e-mail)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: CHINA TO LAUNCH NEW HAMSAT IN 2009

AMSAT says that China will likely launch a new ham radio satellite in 2009. The ham radio space agency says that it has received a report from Michael Chen, BD5RV, that indicates the CAS-1 amateur radio bird has completed its IARU frequency coordination and the hardware has been finished.

The payload of CAS-1 will likely include a CW telemetry beacon, a linear transponder, an FM repeater and a digital store and forward transponder. These operations will use 2 meters for uplinks and 70 centimeters for downlinks at 500mW output power.

The satellite is expected to be launched from China into a sun synchronous orbit with a 670 km apogee. According to Chen the CAS-1 team is waiting for another payload to be finished before launch date is officially set. (ANS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: CALL IT DO-64

AMSAT's Bill Tynan, W3XO has announced that the Delfi C-3 amateur aadio satellite has been issued an OSCAR number. From this point on Delfi-C3 OSCAR-64 or Dutch OSCAR-64 will be known simply as DO-64.

This newest amateur satellite was developed by a team of some 60 students and facility members from various polytechnic schools in The Netherlands. It was successfully launched April, 28th from India aboard a Polar launch vehicle and was successfully commissioned.

Currently DO-64 is transmitting telemetry on the 2 meter amateur band. In addition to its 2 meter downlink, the new bid has an uplink on the 70 cm band. (ANS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AN INTERMITTANT AO-16

AO-16 Command Station Mark Hammond, N8MH, says that over the last several days you are likely to have found the AO-16 ham satellite silent. According to Hammond, there appears to be something in the spacecraft shutting down the transmitter after a short, random period of time.

Hammond says that it does not appear to be a battery related issue. Rather current speculation on the problem includes a temperature issue that has reared its ugly head now that the eclipse periods are increasing and the spacecraft internal temperatures are decreasing.

For the moment, ground control stations will manually turn the satellite on and then configure it for voice operations. This is a manual process and command stations are limited to the East coast of the US. Hammond says that only time will tell if the current situation will stay the same, improve, or get worse. (ANS)

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DX

In DX, word that DL6ZFG will be active portable I-S-Zero from the island of Sardinia until around June 10th. He plans to work all popular modes concentrating on PSK, RTTY, CW and also SSB. Listen out for him mostly on 20, 30 and 40 meters and QSL As directed on the air.

And DL2AAZ, will show up portable V4 using the call 9H3TI from Nevis. He plans on using CW and SSB on 80 through 10 meters through June 15th. QSL via DL2AAZ, either direct or via the bureau.

Also, WA3FPK will be in Rwanda until the 5th of June. He has been issued the callsign 9X0A and plans to be active in his spare time, mainly on 20 meters SSB. QSL via KA1CRP.

Members of the South Flanders DX Activity Group will be active from June 5th to the 9th ON6JUN slash P from the Pegasus Bridge memorial museum. This, as a DX-pedition commemorating World War 2 D-Day landings. Operation will be on all HF bands using CW, SSB, RTTY and PSK. QSL direct or to the bureau via ON5SD

AA8YH, says via the Ohio Penn DX Newsletter that ne will be returning to Tunisia in mid-November for a 5 week stay. He plans to concentrate on the lower frequency bands is willing to accept skeds from QRP stations, Either on CW or SSB. You can contact him via his \e-mail address listed on QRZ.com.

Lastly, SP9PLK, the club station of the 2nd Mechanized Corps of the Polish Land Forces, will be active as HF9GA from the 2nd to 30th of June. QSL this one via SP9PLK.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: COME NORTH TO ALASKA IN AUGUST

Finally this week, we all know that there are a lot of good hamfests out there, but very few that put out radio spots designed to invite the public to come on down. Or in this case its come on up. Up to Alaska for the Anchorage Hamfest. Take a listen:

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Audio only - hear it in the audio version of this newscast downloadable in mp3 form at www.arnewsline.org

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That's Pete Summers, KL2GY, who is the voice of the Anchorage Hamfests radio spot. And in addition to Pete's contribution, the Anchorage Hamfest will have loads of other activities to make the trek to America's last frontier a memorable outing.

Again the dates are August 1st to the 4th at the Anchorage Sheraton Hotel. And as Pete says, to learn more just take your web browser to www dot akhamfest dot com and be ready for a lot of ham radio fun in America's 49th state. (KL7SP)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937,
Arcadia, California 91066.

Before we go, please note that by the time most of you hear this newscast, the nominating period for the 2008 Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award will have closed. The cutoff was Friday, May 30th at midnight. All nominations are now in the hands of the judges. We should have the name of this years recipient in just a few short weeks.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Meachen,
ZL2BHF, saying 73 from down-under, and we thank you for listening.

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